RAGGED SCHOOL UNION QUARTERLY RECORD.

APRIL, 1882.

EARLY PIETY.

"CAST thy bread on the waters, and thou shalt find it after many days." This text is frequently quoted as a stimulus to Christian workers not to be weary in well-doing, for in due season they shall reap if they faint not. And another text—namely, "We walk by faith, and not by sight"—is quoted in support of the maxim that the business of the Christian is to work on unfalteringly, and to leave results to God. The effect of this teaching has been to make the teacher and the minister too often satisfied with his own intentions, and comforted with the belief that it will all come right, even though no signs of spiritual awakening are manifest.

As regards adults, some are Gospel-proof—some are grossly animal—some are steeped in vice and crime. Such antagonistic conditions to spiritual life may well make the matter of conversion a formidable difficulty, and justify the application of such texts as above quoted for the consolation of some of those who may sow in tears; but in the case of the young, and more especially in those of Christian descent, the pious parent or teacher should regard it as a duty to look for present results, and to be pained if they do not appear.

The cure of souls has unquestionably been committed to all parents and Christian teachers. As regards the cure of bodies, what would be thought of a medical man who gave advice and administered medicine day by day without any improvement among his patients? Would he be satisfied, even though he had done his best? Would he not consider that he had made a mistake in his vocation? In the same way, if no spiritual movement is seen in a ragged or ordinary Sabbath school, serious doubts should be entertained as to the character of the work. Of course,

great care must be exercised not to manufacture hypocrites. For any real change in the heart some change in the outward life must show itself. Obedience to parents, kindness to others, evidence of self-sacrifice in the little matters of life, meekness and humility—these fruits of the spirit can grow rapidly in the heart of a child; and therefore, when they do not come, the belief is warranted that no change has taken place.

In a little tract by Dr. J. M. Ferris, printed at the Orphans' Printing Press, Leominster, entitled "Child Converts," he quotes instances from the Bible and ecclesiastical history to show that the past history of the Church warrants the belief in youthful piety. He says:—

"When we glance at the history of conversions in past centuries, it seems strange that there could ever have been the least doubt, or indifference, or hesitation on the subject. Jeremiah and John the Baptist were sanctified unto the Lord from the womb. King Josiah feared the Lord when he was but eight years old. Children sang 'Hosanna to the Son of David' in the Temple, and Christ vindicated them out of the Old Scriptures, saying, 'Yea, have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings Thou hast perfected praise.' The world will never forget His 'Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.'

"Polycarp, the disciple of St. John, and the martyr, who died for Jesus at the age of ninety-five, was converted when he was but nine years old, and served his Lord and Master eighty-six years. Justyn Martyr, who lived in the second century, wrote that many of both sexes 'had been made disciples to Christ from their infancy, and continued uncorrupted all their lives.' Richard Baxter could not remember the time when he did not love God and all that was good. Matthew Henry was converted before he was eleven years old; Mrs. Isabella Graham at ten; President Edwards probably at seven; Dr. Watts at nine.

"President Edwards, in his narrative of the Great Revival, gives a lengthy account of a child who was converted when but four years old; and he speaks of a number of 'others whose ages ranged from nine and ten to fourteen years.' Before that it was 'looked on as a strange thing when any had been savingly wrought upon and remarkably changed in their childhood.' Within the last twenty or thirty years, however, the conversion of multitudes of young children has been one of the most remarkable features of revivals of religion."

The Children's Special Service Mission.

At the great gathering which took place towards the close of the year at the Young Men's Christian Association, Aldersgate Street, of the Children's Special Service Mission, the matter of

conversion was shown to be the leading feature of their work. The meeting was called especially to report on "Seaside Work amongst Children." The following particulars, gleaned from the *Christian*, are interesting:—

Mr. E. T. M. DENNES, in giving an account of the seaside services at Hastings, in September, said the only motto that would describe them was, "The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad." The variety of services held was very great, for there were beach services, garden services, hillside services, drawing-room meetings, lamplight gatherings, and text-searching competitions. Amongst the letters received by Mr. Dennes from the children was one from a little girl of ten, in which she said, alluding to the first service at Hastings, "I first began to love Jesus on that Saturday night, and have been loving Him ever since." Games were employed too, as at other places, to get hold of the boys and girls, the cricket matches figuring in the local papers with full scores attached. Another most successful experiment was that of text-searching competitions, at which prizes were given to those who had the greatest number of times turned most quickly to the texts read out without any reference being given.

Mr. BANASTER had been privileged to labour for the past four summers among the children at Llandudno. The Rev. W. S. Standen accompanied him all through the Llandudno meetings, and won the hearts of the young people by his genial ways and telling illustrations.

Mr. J. W. JORDAN gave encouraging reports of the work done at Eastbourne, and said how much they realised that God had been the Worker at all their meetings. A good work has been done amongst the nurses, several ladies going amongst them on the beach for quiet conversation after the meetings.

Mr. TYLER reported good meetings at Worthing, and several cases of blessing.

Captain E. DRURY said that with his wife and two children he had held services for four weeks at Newquay, in Cornwall. There were good attendances, and very many tokens of blessing among the children.

Mr. T. B. BISHOP, the Hon. Secretary of the Mission, said the Children's Picture Leaflets, of which grants had been made by the Mission, had been distributed during the past summer at 110 different watering-places by ladies and others.

Mr. EDWIN ARROWSMITH was rejoiced to tell of a number of boys who have found blessing this year at Llandudno, and to know of many who were converted in previous years now standing up manfully for their Lord. One lad of sixteen, now in a large office in Paris, amongst a set of infidel godless clerks, and a no less godless employer, is trying to be a blessing there and witnessing for the truth. Two others are witnessing for Christ in a school of two or three hundred boys, have got together a little band of eight to read their Bibles, and, though jeered at by the rest, are holding fast.

The Chairman, Rev. WILSON CARLILE, bore testimony to the power of these seaside meetings to reach the hearts of the children. As regards winter work amongst children, he had found *the magic-lantern of great use, as the Gospel could be earnestly preached to them from a subject thrown on the sheet.*

It is very clear that these friends are animated by the belief in early piety, and work for this result with manifest success.

Let all who have any connection with the young follow their inspiring example. The propriety of gathering them into bands for the sake of continued spiritual oversight has not gone undisputed. No doubt intelligence is needed. There is no case in which the combination of wisdom and goodness is more necessary. Let the thoughtful then combine with the emotional in the superintendence of these spiritual seedplots, and the fruit that ripens shall be an earnest of that day when the world itself shall be one great harvest field; then all shall honour Him, from the least even unto the greatest, and a shout will go up because the kingdoms of this world have become the kingdom of our Lord and His Christ.

The opinions derived from the experience of workers in the juvenile Christian field, if properly matured and wisely and concisely stated, are most valuable, and should be widely circulated. To this end we shall be glad to open our pages to friends on this most interesting question.

ST. GILES'S CHRISTIAN MISSION.

GEORGE HATTON'S name is a household word to the residents in St. Giles's and elsewhere. The voluntary work which he so quietly set on foot some twenty-one years ago entitles him to take no mean rank among Christian workers.

On the occasion of the celebration of the twentieth year of the work, Mr. G. C. Searle, who occupied the chair, said he recollected directing Mr. Hatton to a pew on the occasion of his first visit to Bloomsbury Chapel, with which church he and the work became associated in the palmy days of Dr. Brock. The lesson he drew from this was, despise not the day of small things. Mr. Hatton and one or two of his companions had casually come into the chapel; he gave them attention and a seat, and from that circumstance a very important train of events had arisen.

When Mr. Hatton, in response to a call from the chair, rose to

tell the story of the St. Giles's Mission, he was greeted with cheers again and again. He said he was exceedingly glad and thankful that his thoughts and steps had ever been attracted towards St. Giles's as a needy field of labour, for he had been brought into contact with some of the most noble and devoted spirits whom he rejoiced to count among his choicest friends. He believed he should be echoing the sentiments of all fellow-labourers present when he said that to know the struggling poor of the district was to esteem and love them. It was exactly twenty years ago that half a dozen young men, all belonging to the church at Bloomsbury Chapel, met at the house where he (Mr. Hatton) was born, 99, Chancery Lane—now long since taken down—to consider if something more could not be done among the poor of St. Giles's. The family at 99, Chancery Lane then included the speaker's parents and four sisters, and the object had in view was to supplement the already effective work of their friend Mr. McCree, to whom belonged the honour of having done much in early days to diffuse light and truth among the darkest homes of the district. Mr. McCree had paved the way for those who had followed. The outcome of their first meeting was the formation of a society for the visitation and the relief of the poor; and it was arranged that the members should assemble in the same place every week, and each drop fourpence into the box—a quondam tea-caddy—that stood upon the table. A secretary and treasurer were appointed, and a record was to be kept of the cases visited and relieved. The work thus proceeded for some time; but though progress might be slow, numbers of young men joined their ranks who augmented the funds by their own weekly subscriptions, and also by the contributions of their friends; much good was done, and these Monday evening meetings were among the happiest memories of his life. In time a strong desire was felt for a meeting-place, a home for converts, and an attraction for others who might be induced to attend on Sunday evenings. They procured a little room used by Bloomsbury friends, and capable of holding fifty persons; but though they issued thousands of bills their first congregation consisted of only six or seven elderly women. They toiled for years before it was filled, and before it became too strait for their growing numbers. At this station, No. 20, Queen Street, Seven Dials, they continued three years; but in July, 1864, they took up their abode at King Street Hall, where they continued to have good times. Then they again needed a larger place, and they thought of purchasing an eligible piece of land in Queen Street, which happened to be for sale. They determined, however, to give a certain price and no more; if the price rose above their figure they said they would accept it as the will of God that they were not to

proceed. At the auction the bidding went a few pounds beyond the sum allotted, so that the scheme came to nothing; but on the very next day a letter was received from the church at Little Wild Street, offering the chapel to the St. Giles's Mission, without any restrictions. They accepted the gift, put the premises in thorough repair, and now Wild Street was their headquarters. From July, 1864, to January, 1867, they were a branch of the Bloomsbury Chapel Domestic Mission; but since the latter date they had been dependent upon the voluntary offerings of the public. The church was founded on March 21, 1867; and the renovated chapel was opened by Mr. Spurgeon and the Earl of Shaftesbury on May 13, 1874. The number of persons received into church fellowship was 696; while from the first the public had encouraged the work by subscribing £14,538 to their funds.

During the twenty-one years of this Mission's existence many changes for the better have taken place in St. Giles's. A whole host of beneficent agencies have been at work under various banners with different leaders, but all having one common object.

But one of the most important improvements that the district has yet seen is the erection by the Peabody Trustees of a large block of suitable dwellings for the poor in very close proximity to the Mission Chapel, in Little Wild Street. These buildings stand on the site of some of the worst fever-dens and pest-houses of the neighbourhood, and consist of 540 rooms, affording accommodation for some 2,500 persons in respectability and comfort.

This noble work, which has its headquarters in Little Wild Street, Drury Lane, has branch operations at Great Earl Street, Brook Street, Holborn; Neal Street, St. Giles's; Vere Street, and Coldbath Fields.

Among the names of the trustees of the Mission premises are the well-known and much-honoured names of F. A. Bevan, Esq., and the Hon. A. F. Kinnaird. Besides these there is a good Finance and Working Committee.

The operations are multifarious, as will be seen by the subjoined statement:—

List of Meetings.

Sunday.—Adult Services for preaching the Gospel, at 11 a.m. and 7 p.m., Mission Chapel, Little Wild Street, Drury Lane. Sunday Schools: King Street Hall at 10 a.m. and 2.45 p.m.; Board School, Vere Street, at 2.45 p.m.; Brooke Street at 2.45 p.m. Children's Services, King Street Hall, at 11 a.m. and 6.15 p.m. Bible Class for Young Women, Mission Chapel, Little Wild Street, Drury Lane, at 3 p.m. Open-air Preaching, Seven Dials, at 3 p.m. House-to-house

Visitation at 2.30 p.m. Prayer Meetings, Mission Chapel, at 8.30 p.m. Gospel Services in Men's Kitchens at 3.30 p.m.

Monday.—Meeting for Discharged Prisoners, Coldbath Fields, at 9 a.m., and every other morning except Sunday. Penny Savings Bank, King Street Hall, at 7 p.m. Mission Chapel, Meeting for United Prayer at 8.30 p.m.

Tuesday.—Meeting for Reformed Men at 8.30 p.m. King Street Hall and Mission Chapel, Mothers' Meetings at 6.30 p.m. Band of Hope at 6.30 p.m.; Senior ditto at 8.15 p.m. Earl Street, Singing Class at 8 p.m.

Wednesday.—Mission Chapel, Adult Service, Preaching the Gospel, at 8.30 p.m.

Thursday.—Mission Chapel, Popular Lectures. King Street Hall, Good Templars' Meeting at 8.30 p.m. Brooke Street, Evangelistic Service at 8.30 p.m. Mothers' Meetings at 6.30 p.m. Young Women's Bible Class at 8.30 p.m.

Friday.—Prayer Meeting, Earl Street, at 8.30 p.m. Class Meeting, Brooke Street, at 8 p.m.

Saturday.—Mission Chapel, Meeting for United Prayer at 8.30 p.m.

The Children.

Although the St. Giles's Christian Mission has a distinctive work among youths and adults of the criminal class, seeking to reclaim such by the power of Divine truth, it does not withhold itself from works of a preventive character, but on Sundays and week evenings it lays hold of the young by means of Class-teaching, Religious Services, Christian Bands, Singing Classes, Penny Banks, Illustrated Lectures, Bands of Hope, Bible Classes, &c.

Children are gathered twice on the Sunday at Neale Street, Brooke Street, and Vere Street; and in the evening at Neale Street a Children's Service is held. About 700 children are thus brought into contact with upwards of sixty godly teachers.

The Children's Service on Sunday evening at Neale Street, attended by 250 children, is devout and orderly. It is no formal talk. The address, the singing, and the prayer are characterised by appropriateness. There is not only fitness but vitality. The children are made not only to understand, but especially to feel, that they are the objects of Christ's solicitude, and that childhood is the most fitting time to enter His fold. The first hour is devoted to an ordinary service, the second to a prayer and inquiry meeting, to which about 100 children remain at the close. Those who give indications of seriousness are taken aside for conversation and prayer.

Some of our friends may be instructed and encouraged by the history of this service. At its commencement, and for some time afterwards, it was poorly attended; and still worse, no results accrued upon the labour expended. This gave rise to much anxious thought. At a conference of the workers it was resolved to set apart Tuesday evening for united prayer, to plead with God for a blessing on the work. They had been working with energy and purpose, but, alas! with self-confidence and trust in an arm of flesh. But when they cried, "Awake, O arm of the Lord!" a fire from heaven descended in their midst. The children crowded to catch the sacred heat, and so the blessing sought for came, not in intermittent drops, but as a continuous, copious shower. Out of this service has grown a Young Christians' Band, or band of young believers. It meets every Thursday. There are twenty-five members under the care of eight teachers.

Bands of Hope, Junior and Senior.—These useful and necessary adjuncts to Christian work, which are especially needed among a population where mental and moral restraint are almost unknown, are in capital condition. The Junior Band has 179 on the books, with an average attendance of 93. The Senior Band has 127 on the books, and an average attendance of 50. Associated with these is a Drum-and-Fife Band, which is of good service in giving the elder lads occupation and a motive for coming together. During the year about 1,700 periodicals having a bearing on temperance have been distributed among the members, being a Pure Literature Society on a small scale.

A House-to-house Visiting Society, consisting of some seventy members, has been some time at work. In order to increase its usefulness a Sick and Needy Fund has been started.

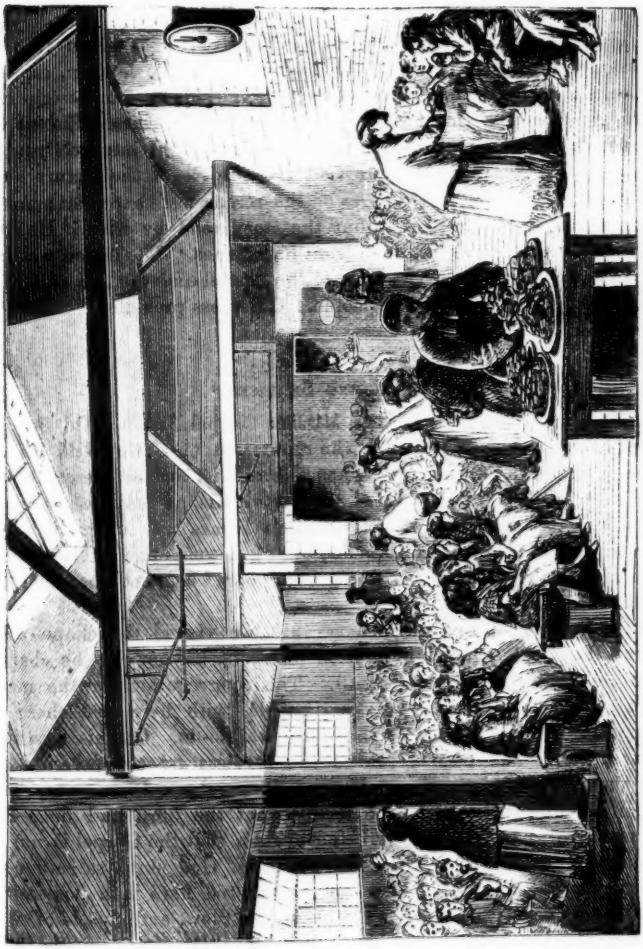
Lodging-house and Kitchen Work supply what is wanting in house-to-house visitation. Difficult and dispiriting as such work must be, it is nevertheless faced and persisted in. It is a fine school in which to acquire patient continuance in well-doing. The occupants of underground cellars present a most uncongenial soil for the Gospel.

Open-air preaching in the courts and slums, and in the Seven Dials, completes the threefold mode of attack upon the indifferent or infirm—upon those who can't and upon those who won't come to the chapel or mission-room.

And these are not all the good things provided, for a female missionary is employed, whose daily business it is to run errands of mercy, who can enter more readily many homes than a male missionary, and can minister more appropriately on particular times and occasions.

And last, but not least in importance, the Penny Bank gathers up

the pence which would otherwise go in drink, some £140 being contributed during the year.



CHILDREN'S TEA PARTY IN THE SCHOOLROOM OF KING STREET HALL, ST. GILES'S.

The children have, during the winter season, their occasional teas, when a great many needy ones are regaled with bread-and-butter and cake. The accompanying picture is a poem in itself. The piles of

cake and bread-and-butter distributed by the loving hands of those who watch for their souls, predisposes the little ones to open their hearts to the Saviour, for they are assured that if He is like teacher He must be good.

The Fortnightly Lecture is very attractive; it is given in the Mission Chapel. A sheet 20 feet square, a double lantern, capital slides, shown by the oxyhydrogen light. The narrative or descriptive part, given with a clear, musical, penetrating voice, are sufficient to feast the eyes and hold the attention of some eight hundred young people. On the night of our visit the subject of the lecture was "Friendless Bob." The pictures on the screen were excellent; these were not in rapid transition, but the story read by Mr. G. Hatton was sufficiently interesting to prevent impatience. The lesson was on the power of kindness. The body of the chapel and the two galleries were nearly filled with young people. Quietness prevailed.

Preaching Services.

These are conducted in the Mission Chapel, Little Wild Street, a very squalid quarter. Bad as the reputation of Little Wild Street now is, there was once a time when the district formed the centre of the most fashionable quarter of the metropolis, as may be gathered from the fact that the present Mission House was originally the chapel of the Spanish ambassador, built 200 years ago. The chapel has been modernised and made comfortable and commodious, and also well ventilated.

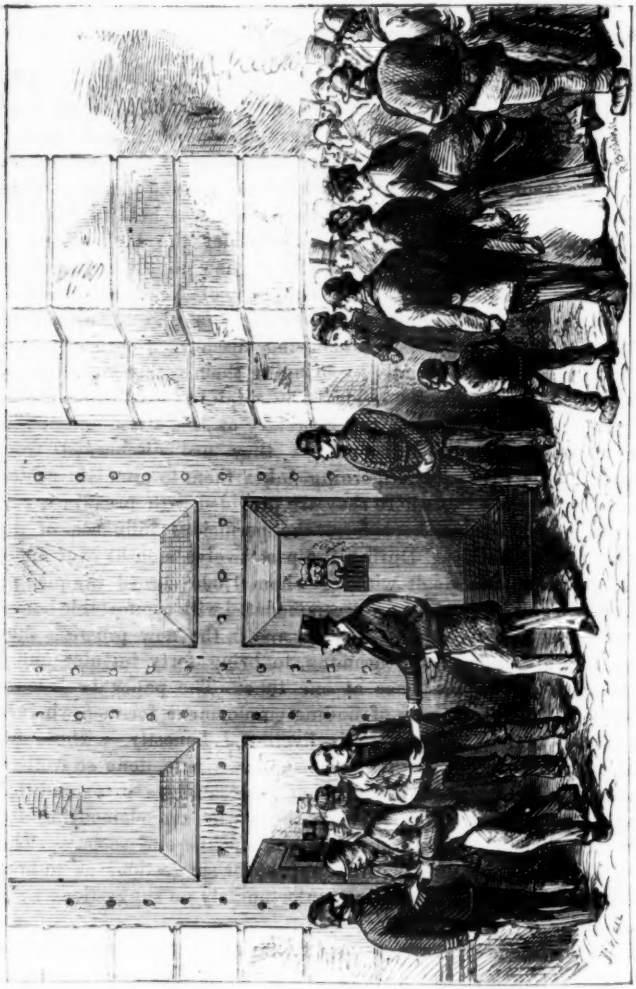
On Sunday evening, February 19th, we visited the chapel and found the people gathering in good numbers, the body of the chapel and one gallery being quite full. The congregation for the most part consisted of decent working people, with here and there a sprinkling of the poorer or the more well-to-do. On this occasion some interest had been given to the services by the presence of certain members of the Tower Hamlets Evangelistic Association, who came not only to sing, but to testify what the Lord had done for them, the object of their visit being to show that the Gospel is not a cunningly-devised fable, but the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. The church gathered here is in possession of the true fire—it constitutes the backbone, thew, and muscle of this varied Mission work. Its members give their time, talents, and energies on the Sabbath and through the week, as occasion serves, at the different stations among children and adults, chiefly for the promotion of their spiritual welfare.

The Rescue Work.

Some five years ago, when addressing a crowd made up to a large degree of persons who had graduated in every form of vice and crime, an appeal to some of them to rise and wrestle with the corruptions of their nature, and resolve by the grace of God to live clean and honest lives, was met with the reply, "Why don't you help us?" It was then determined, God helping, to do something for these poor wretches, who in many cases have become criminals through their unfortunate surroundings. Operations were at once commenced which were fraught with results of a very encouraging nature. On the removal from Great Earl Street a conference was held in the new premises, Brook Street, Holborn, to consider the best means of dealing with discharged prisoners with a view to the reduction of crime. Rev. F. E. Lloyd Jones, chaplain of Newgate, presided. Mr. Hatton read a short paper describing the plan of operations pursued. "These are, first influencing discharged prisoners by preaching the Gospel, secondly by bringing them within the scope of home Christian influence, and thirdly by obtaining for them suitable employment. Mr. Wheatley, the Secretary of the Mission, amongst other means, intercepts prisoners as they are discharged from Coldbath Fields Prison of a morning, takes them to premises rented by the Mission close by, where they are provided with breakfast, and the more hopeful cases kept from the pernicious influence of the common lodging-houses. During the past twelve months over 5,000 men have been thus dealt with, of whom 1,695 signed the pledge. One hundred and forty-two were accommodated with comfortable homes in Great Earl Street during the year, and in the new premises they will be able, if funds are forthcoming, to bring forty inmates under this home Christian influence at one time. The paper dwelt more particularly on the difficulty of finding employment for men who are willing and anxious to earn their livelihood honestly. Those for whom employment had been found have, as a rule, done so well as to make the directors of the Mission most anxious to extend this means of permanent reformation to those who are clamouring for advice and assistance to become reputable members of society. The paper, therefore, concluded with an appeal for suggestions as to how this difficulty might be met, but unfortunately no suggestions were forthcoming.

Many experienced gentlemen spoke, including the Chairman, the Rev. J. W. Horsley, Chaplain of the House of Detention; Captain Harvey, of Millbank; Lieutenant-Colonel Plummer, Governor of Borstal Gaol; the Rev. J. G. Tipper, of Pentonville; and Mr.

Wheatley, the Secretary of the Mission. Their testimony was unanimously in praise of the valuable philanthropic work done by the



DISCHARGED PRISONERS RECEIVING AN INVITATION TO BREAKFAST AT THE PRISON GATES.

Mission, and by all organisations for aiding prisoners. Money, of course, is needed for the work, but all speakers concurred in the

statement that want of funds is a difficulty easily met in comparison with that of overcoming the reluctance of employers to give work to a man who has come out of a prison, and the hostility of workmen and fellow-servants. The Chaplain of the House of Detention gave some interesting instances where trivial expenditure from his own pocket had put despairing men in the way of honest work; while the Ordinary of Newgate, who for sixteen years has had to do with the administration of the oldest Prisoners' Aid Fund in the kingdom—the City of London Sheriffs' Fund—gave even more valuable testimony to the good that may be done, at small cost, by efficient aid to discharged prisoners. Mr Howard Vincent, the Director of Criminal Prosecutions, said that missions such as that had the cordial sympathy and gratitude of the police authorities. He recognised the enormous difficulty of obtaining employment for discharged prisoners, and the value of the aid which enabled them to get over the first few days after leaving prison. Much was said about the difficulty in the way of discharged prisoners on leave having to report themselves to the police. Being the law, of course it had to be complied with, but the police authorities were desirous of giving every indulgence and assistance to aid men who were living honestly, and to prevent any unnecessary exposure of their unfortunate antecedents. *Where they were provided with a guarantee that a man was in regular employment, he was not even required to make his monthly report in person.* All that was needed was that he should furnish by letter information to enable a plain-clothes officer to see that he was in employment. He was sure he might speak not merely for the Metropolitan Police, but for the City Police, and the police of the whole country, in expressing a hope that Institutions like the St. Giles's Mission might be extended.

At a visit recently paid to Coldbath Fields at 8.45 a.m., I found Mr. Wheatley and another friend at the prison gates, issuing the usual invitation. On this occasion a dozen men accepted the invitation to breakfast. The back and front kitchens of a house immediately opposite the prison have been rented and appropriately fitted up for the purpose. During the breakfast a chapter—John xi.—was read with intelligence and emotional expression, after which a few fitting words were spoken. They were also told that having been abstainers of necessity, and having had experience of its advantages, they might be willing to adopt it from principle, and they were therefore invited to sign the pledge. Six of them readily complied. They were also invited to attend the Mission services at Brook Street, Little Wild Street, or to attend the services at the various Missions in the neighbourhoods where they reside. I also visited the Home for Reformed Men at Brook Street. During the morning I witnessed Mr. Wheatley's

mode of dealing with the applicants for employment or pecuniary assistance. I was certain an impression was made on these men that they were face to face with a friend; but nevertheless one who had too much experience and practical sagacity to be bamboozled by whining tales or plausible statements. In several cases remonstrance and rebuke were wisely administered. Some came to return money that had been lent; others to tell of weary miles tramped in search of employment; some to borrow a few shillings to tide over a difficulty. Several were passed on to employment. One having an offer of employment at Grimsby, was put in the way of getting there free of cost, through the kindness of a captain. A boy had a fit-out provided for sea, going apprentice for four years. The clothes were made on the premises by a reformed prisoner who had been looked on as incorrigible.

The following copy of a letter, dated February 12, 1882, from Howard Vincent, Esq., Criminal Director, is valuable as showing the twofold benefit conferred:—

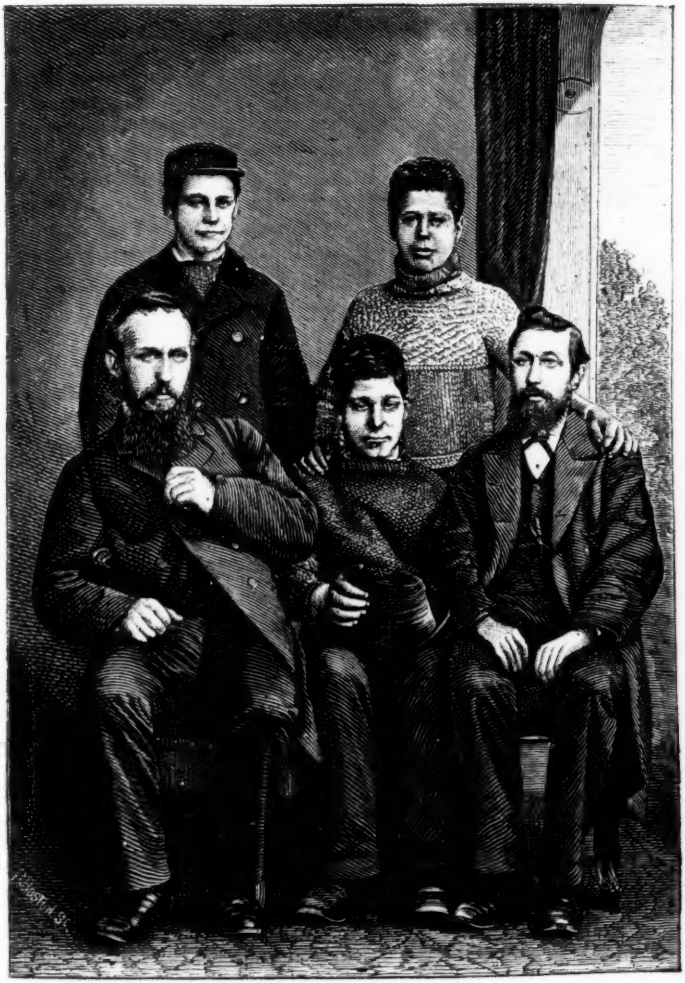
"My dear Sir,—To-day's papers show that philanthropy and assistance to public justice may well go hand in hand. For your acts under the first head I was able to make public acknowledgment the other day. For the latter I thank you now most heartily.

"Yours truly,

"W. Wheatley, Esq." "C. E. Vincent.

The Rev. George Playford, Chaplain of Holloway Prison, says: "Were it not for the assistance afforded to the hopeful cases of discharged prisoners by your Mission I fear a measure of despondency would come over me; but when I know that every hopeful case sent to you will be dealt with according to the teaching of Holy Scripture, that every man is a brother with an immortal soul, for whom our blessed Redeemer made an atonement, I feel strengthened and enabled to persevere. During the past year, referring to my book, I find that I have sent forty cases. Some have gone to sea; for others you have been able to obtain employment, and they are doing well."

The following letter of a man who had been convicted many times, for whom employment was found, will be read with interest. L. J. K. made application for admission into the Home in December, 1879. He was asked what he had been doing for a living. He replied, "I have done nothing that is good—but on the contrary, everything that is bad. I am really sick of my life. I do hope that you will take me in and help me to become an honest man." "Have you been convicted many times?" he was asked; "and when was your first conviction? and have you a father?" His answer was, "I have



THREE OF THE RESCUED BOYS, AS SEEN BY THE SUPERINTENDENT AND SECRETARY.

no father. My mother turned me out of doors at the age of thirteen. I then stole a pair of boots, and was sent to prison for one month. Convicted again for stealing a till, and sentenced to three months. Convicted again for a watch; sentence six months. Next time four months for stealing a purse. Again fourteen days for assaulting the police. The next six months for a watch. Convicted again; three months for an attempt. Sent to prison again six months for a watch. The next time twelve months for a purse. Again two years for a watch. Convicted again; sentence seven years for a watch. And last, two months for an attempt to steal a watch, and sent back to finish my ticket." "What made you come to us?" "I heard of your kindness at a Mission down Spitalfields, and I thought I would try and get an honest living." He was admitted into the Home, and watched very carefully. He gave signs of repentance, and was often found in tears when spoken to. A situation was obtained for him, where he has proved himself worthy of the trial given. His master places full confidence in him, and many pounds are entrusted to him. Surely this is a brand plucked from the burning! The following is an extract from a letter received from him:—

"Dear Sir,—Through your kind help, and the help of my master, Mr. G., I have been saved from a life of sin and shame; and while I speak of my earthly friends I must not forget my Heavenly Friend and Redeemer. He sought me, and would not let me go, when the world at large justly turned their backs on me. Then it was that the Lord showed me His power to save, for I was an outcast from all respectable society. I can say that since I have come to you I have led an honest life. I have been one year and two months with my master, and have been trusted with many pounds."

The testimony of a sailor boy helped some time since, now grown up almost to manhood: "As I was in London I thought I should like to come and see you once more. I was looking at you this morning giving your tickets at the prison gates, and I thought of the kindness received two years ago when I came out myself, and how different it is with me now."

OUR SUPERINTENDENT'S NOTE-BOOK.

How many excellent thoughts, how much important information and positive good, are lost for want of being noted! Where would the great scientists of to-day have been had not those who preceded them kept a note of their observations? Methinks in greater darkness than they are now! How much more dangerous would be the perils of the mighty deep if those who have done "business in the great waters" had not kept

their log-books! And oh! Christian worker, where should we have been but for the "Note-Book" of our God and His Christ, with its marvellous records, its divine and sublime truths, its touching stories, its profound utterances, its intense pathos, its glorious news, its practical directions and encouragements to those who are seeking to be co-workers with the Great Author to bring those who are out of the way into the straight and narrow path which leadeth unto eternal life?

Yes, note-books are good, and we think every superintendent of a Ragged School ought to keep one, especially if he has a large, pitiful heart, which is moved with compassion as he looks upon the struggles, the sins, and the sorrows of those amongst whom he labours. And not only should the note-book be kept, but the contents should be made known to guide, encourage, and strengthen fellow-labourers.

Would not all our note-books agree in this: that more help is urgently needed—that our schools want enlarging, and require to be adapted so as to be more attractive to those who are like sheep and lambs without a shepherd, and upon whom the wolves of sin and suffering have already left their mark?

And would not our note-books also record how great is the joy of the work of rescuing the perishing, of feeding the lambs, leading the blind, unstopping the deaf ear of indifference, comforting the sad, feeding the hungry, raising the fallen, and bringing all to the Master's feet? Yes, they would all agree that the joy is unspeakable and full of glory, and confirm the truth, so little grasped nowadays, that "it is more blessed to give than to receive."

Surely the sad scene witnessed by our esteemed secretary and myself this Sabbath afternoon is worthy of note. It will not easily be effaced from my memory; time may remove some of the vivid touches of colour, but the sombre outline will ever remain.

During the afternoon the parents of one of our scholars in the elementary division had sent to say that they wished to see the superintendent, as their little boy was very ill. Directly the school was dismissed the secretary and myself went to see them. We were asked into a little parlour, where we at once recognised the little sufferer. He was lying all of a heap on an old broken-down sofa; his pale, thin face looked so full of anguish that our hearts were at once moved with compassion. His mother said that he was at times delirious and used very bad language, which she said the doctor attributed to the complaint! We spoke to him, saying how sorry we were to find him so ill. He only looked up in our faces, placed his thin hand in mine, and immediately called out "Father!" with a shrill voice, but there was no response; with fearful irritability he screamed "Father!" Still no answer to the dying boy. He then

shrieked out, "Father, come here, you ———!" The language was fearful, and our hearts felt sick with sadness. The father at last came, when the boy peremptorily said, "Carry me upstairs." The father wished him to remain where he was; but with oaths he screamed to be carried upstairs at once. At length the father complied, and we were asked to follow. The poor child was taken into a bedroom in which the only article of furniture was a half-tester bedstead; he was laid on the bare sacking and covered over. The change seemed to pacify him; and seeing us standing, with much thoughtfulness he asked his mother to bring us a chair. I then said to him again, "I am very sorry you are so ill," and that I hoped he was looking to Jesus. He replied rather suddenly, "I don't want to die." We talked to him about the love of Jesus, and asked if he would like us to pray to Jesus for him, to which he faintly replied, "Yes." We knelt down and prayed, and a divine calm came over the sufferer, as with simple utterances we commended him to the Good Shepherd's care, and we left him much happier.

From that time he gradually sank, and on calling one morning I caught sight of the coffin which contained the wasted and worn form of our little scholar.

Thankful I am that this sad case in my now lengthened experience is exceptional. Our clouds have silver linings, as the following case, one out of many, testifies:—

It is now more than twelve years ago when in our Infant Class might be seen one of the neatest, cleanest, and brightest of little girls. You would almost wonder how in such a neighbourhood in which our school is situated infant life would be able to develop so healthful an appearance. In due time she became too old for the Infant Class, and was placed in a Scripture Class, where until very recently she remained.

To-night I have had the inexpressible joy of receiving into our Mission Church the dear scholar who was once the little girl whose face used to brighten our own as we looked at it when she was in the Infant Class. I can understand now why there is joy in heaven over every sinner that repenteth, for something of that joy has been mine to-night. Let us during 1882 keep up our note-book, not only for the benefit of others, but for our own safety. We shall not have to keep the note-book long. "The day is far spent, the night is at hand." "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might,"—not in thine own strength, but in the strength of the Lord.

Dove Row, March, 1882. FAITHFUL.

"BUTTERCUPS AND DAISIES"

EARLY as it may seem, according to the unromantic almanack, there are not wanting indications even to the pent-up Londoner that "the winter is past, the flowers appear on the earth, and the time of the singing of birds is come." Already the trees and shrubs are putting forth their leafy buds, spring flowers are charmingly plentiful, happy precursors of the ever popular "buttercups and daisies," and the genial sun condescends to shine with life-giving warmth. These betoken an early approach of the excursion season, when everybody will be thinking of flocking out of town. A new element will soon be added to the effervescing excitement of our London streets by the appearance of pleasure vans, laden with frolicking children whose joyous shouting will demonstrate that they are "on pleasure bent." And who would have it otherwise? "I can never look upon the van-loads of happy children without emotional tears," said a by-no-means foolish man, last summer, and we believe the feeling is general.

The custom, prevalent as it has become, is quite of modern origin. Not so long ago it was regarded as a novel proceeding to give school-children a "day in the country." The remark applies indeed to the town poor generally, who have found increasing necessity for relaxation, and for some respite from the smoke and din of city life, since the time John Gilpin took his famous ride after "twice ten years'" close application to business.

The records of the Ragged School Union show that very early in the history of the movement the desirability was felt for giving a holiday to the poor waifs and strays away from the vitiated courts and alleys in which their lives were spent.

In July, 1855, the first appeal was penned by our noble President as follows:—

"CHILDREN'S TREATS.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine

July 23rd, 1855.

SIR,—The experience of the good effects produced on many of the Ragged Schools by treats given to the children in the summer season, induces me to ask your aid in an endeavour to render the practice more general. It tends, I am sure, very much to the easy discipline of the schools, and to the refinement of the children themselves. A day's sport at the Crystal Palace, or in places like Greenwich Park, is much looked forward to, and is not readily forgotten. I trust that many of your readers will join in the proposed movement.

Your obedient servant,

SHAFTESBURY."

This letter was accompanied by a cheque, which elicted similar gifts from friends, including one from "Rob Roy," who wrote from the north that he could not "enjoy the pleasant sunny breezes by the seashore without doing something to second Lord Shaftesbury's effort to send some of our pent-up London children for a holiday treat." A sum of 42*l.* was thus realised, and this enabled nearly 1,000 children to have an enjoyable change. It is true the school managers were content with distances and attractions that it is to be feared the present generation would regard as "tame." After long railway trips inland, and to the seashore, to say nothing of the Continent, whither the boys of one of the refuges went last year, it is no wonder that Kennington Common, the Polytechnic, and the London parks should seem commonplace.

There are not wanting indications that in some people's mind the "Day in the Country" for schools has been a little overdone. Let it be granted that with this, as with all good customs, there may be abuses arise which ought to be checked. The managers may not have the "Excursion" genius of a Cook, and may run into expenses and difficulties which are to be lamented. The complaint, too, made in the *Times* last year of children getting drink at the public-houses where the horses stop on the road, should be sternly repressed. It is worthy of consideration whether the use of vans in connection with our Ragged Schools should not be generally superseded by the more expeditious railway and steamboat. London is vastly extending in every direction, and go which way you will by road, it must entail a long ride through crowded streets and hedges of shops and houses. Take, for instance, a journey by main road from London to Croydon. The ten or twelve miles will be found to be practically one long street, with occasional breaks and glimpses of green fields, but the sight of bricks and mortar never being lost all the way.

Again, the complaint is made that the children often get more than one treat during the summer. This may arise from the want of unity of action amongst schools in the same localities, and is to be deprecated. The child, too, belongs perhaps to the Band of Hope, or the Children's Band, and the superintendents may desire to keep the Band together by a "day's trip," and in this way an additional treat is secured, and the most captious critic would hardly object to it.

Some attention should be given to the question of part payment, as many children of even the poorest class get coppers, which are freely spent—not to say wasted—on the holiday. It may be wise in some cases to make a small charge, and to remit it where it is necessary; care being exercised that no needy child is excluded.

It is said also that the days are often wet; the turmoil and risk of the long day out do more harm than good. It may be freely confessed with the poet, that "into each life some rain must fall—some days be dark and dreary." This difficulty is not confined to poor children's treats; for we often hear of continental or seaside trips being spoilt by the wet, and yet year by year the holiday is renewed. We would urge Ragged School friends therefore to secure their children's "Day in the Country," but to make such wise arrangements as shall secure the maximum of pleasure with the minimum of objection.

There is a later phase of this holiday question which is capable of profitable development to an unlimited extent. We refer to the effort begun about four years ago by an East End clergyman for sending children to the country for a week or a fortnight's holiday. The plan was adopted in one of our Ragged Schools with great success and encouragement. Last year a benevolent lady in Essex kindly offered to find food and lodgings for fortnightly relays of our children amid the cottagers of a charmingly rustic village in Essex. It was a great joy to the teachers to select the pale-faced children, and to send them off duly labelled to the country; and the change wrought in the fortnight was often truly surprising. We hope this praiseworthy scheme may be widely extended this year, and we would earnestly solicit the co-operation of all friends in extending it. This may be done by finding cottagers in the country villages willing to board the children, and by gifts of money to defray the cost of these advantages elsewhere.

In thus seeking to infuse healthful joy and sunshine into the lives of poor ragged children, the teachers who are working amongst them have not been overlooked.

Twelve years ago, the gifted authoress A. L. O. E. made a proposal to give a week's change to the Ragged School teachers, amid peaceful country scenes and fresh air, whose mind and body might be refreshed and strengthened.

This "Rest for Weary Workers" has been continued, and is a source of help and comfort to many who are battling with ignorance, vice, and misery in the slums of London. Help is also solicited for this benevolent plan, which is sustained from year to year by the gifts of sympathising friends.

VISIT TO KING EDWARD INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS.

By A Journalist.

Lately the air has been so full of the abuses which have, or are supposed to have, taken place in industrial schools, that public atten-

tion has been drawn to these institutions in a very inquiring spirit; and we fear that a large section of the public, without giving much thought to the matter, have jumped at conclusions which are not in accordance with facts.

It is not our intention in the present article to enter into a defence of industrial schools, but simply to give a description of what we saw at a recent visit to King Edward Industrial Schools, Albert Street, Mile End New Town. Being present at the anniversary meeting of King Edward Ragged Schools, at which the Earl of Shaftesbury presided, we learnt for the first time that the managers of that excellent institution had two industrial schools in connection therewith, and being introduced to one of the managers, that gentleman at once offered to forward an order for us to view the schools, making the orders entirely open as to date, so that we could use them whenever and at what hour of the day we chose. Thus our visit was a surprise visit. No person connected with the management was aware of our intention to visit on that day, and therefore there could have been no preparation for us.

Mile End New Town is not a nice neighbourhood; that is a truism which its most enthusiastic devotees would admit. The district is wretchedly poor, and there is a strong smell of fried fish and other cheap and nasty commodities; and the houses have a poverty-stricken appearance. But here is the King Edward Industrial School. A very imposing-looking building is this school, and we cannot help contrasting it with its surroundings. We ring the bell, and are admitted into a small, neatly-furnished room, in perfect keeping with the small, neatly-dressed maiden who opens the door for us. We present our card, and ask for the Matron (Miss Crump), and watch with a critical eye the actions of our young attendant. "Please take a seat, sir," she says, as walking to a shelf, she places our card on a tray, and leaves the room in search of the matron. We are not alone long before Miss Crump gives us the pleasure of introducing ourselves to and presenting our credentials, which read thus:—"Miss Crump, —Will you kindly show the bearer over the institution? Let him see the whole working." We do not hesitate to inform Miss Crump that we propose to publish an account of our visit, and that whatever she says may be taken down in evidence against her. Strange to say, however, this brought no cloud to the brow of the lady. On the contrary, she entered upon a description of the working of the institution with the zest and enthusiasm of one who was proud of her work. Turning to a small cupboard, the matron produced the register of entries, which is illustrated by photographs, and if photographic pictures can tell tales, wonderful indeed are the tales told. Here,

for example, is the photograph of a girl aged nine, who having been charged at the Thames Police-court with picking pockets, is sent to this girls' refuge and industrial school. Opposite to this picture is another of the same girl, when in a few years' time she is sent out of the institution to a situation. What a difference! We speak not of the advantage of the change of apparel from dirty rags to neat and clean garments, but of that bright and noble change in the expression of the countenance.

Such were the pictures; let us see the living originals. We pass through a class-room and enter the school-room, where about forty girls are assembled under the care of a governess. The girls rise as we enter the room, and answer cheerfully, "Good afternoon, sir," to our friendly greeting. "Good afternoon, girls. I'm sorry I was not here in time for dinner. What had you to eat?" "Stew, sir." "Did you all like it?" "Yes, sir." "Did you have enough of it?" No fear of the consequences of a breach of discipline could restrain the smile provoked by the evident absurdity of our question as in chorus the girls answered, "Yes, sir." We glanced at the row of shining boots worn by the girls, and looked in vain for the broken old misfits about which so much has been said by interested parties. "Do you clean your own boots?" "Yes, sir." "Do you wash yourselves?" "Yes, sir." Then, noticing how exceedingly neat each girl's hair was, we asked if they did it themselves, and were informed that all but the youngest and latest arrivals performed that necessary operation for themselves. Wishing the girls a "Merry Christmas," to which they heartily responded "Thank you, sir, the same to you," we left the school-room and entered the lower dormitory. Ranged along the walls on either side of the long room were the iron bedsteads—a separate one for each girl—and they are model beds—snow-white counterpanes, beautiful thick warm blankets, clean sheets, and comfortable wool mattresses; no girl, in whatever station in life she may be, need have a better or more comfortable bed. All were alike, and the room itself light, airy, and spotlessly clean. We passed from this room upstairs, where we examined the wardrobes. Here all was perfection itself. Cupboards with partition shelves, in which the "Sunday clothes" were placed in the best possible order, carefully folded, properly brushed, and put away in a neat and tidy manner. We pass on to the linen room, where are stored sheets and bedding for keeping the supply in good order, clearly proving that things are not done here with a grudging hand. Hanging from poles here, too, are dozens of pairs of new boots—good, strong, and serviceable. Let us pass on from room to room; light, air, cleanliness everywhere. We enter the sewing-room; a cheerful fire is burning in a large grate,

and the floor, forms, and table are spotlessly clean, and the whole of the work is done by the girls. All the clothing is made by them, and thoroughly well made it is, too. We now enter the infirmary, a room which had no occupants at the time of our visit, and which is not frequently used, although fitted with every convenience and comfort for little sufferers when required.

One more room on the upper floor we visited, and we feel almost afraid to name it lest some kind-hearted and weak-headed philanthropist should faint at the name of a punishment room! But there, we have named it, and we feel a kind of relief at having done so. But there is nothing very awful in this room—well lighted, thoroughly dry, free from draughts, and perfectly clean; and those who are burdened with the noise and turmoil of life would be glad of such a retreat, the punishment consisting only in the fact that the girl who is put there is compelled to remain alone for a certain number of hours. This may seem very bad, but it must be remembered that the girls who have to be dealt with here are those who have been taken from the very lowest dregs of society, who have been in the habit of receiving in their own homes (heaven save the mark!) a word and a blow, sometimes the blow first and the word after—children who have been the associates of the worst of characters, who know no control, who have been brought up and educated in deceit. It is children of this character that the managers of this institution are endeavouring to reclaim, and is it not presumption on the part of those who know nothing of the training of children to attempt to dictate to those who are making the subject the study of their lives? We are informed that the proportion of these girls who are sent out from the institution with good characters conscientiously given is 75 per cent., and surely this is a perfect answer to those weak-minded people who would disparage the noble work of industrial schools. But this is a digression.

The punishment room, like the infirmary, was free from occupants (and with the exception of a table, is void of furniture), so that in this wonderful school there are both good health and general good conduct.

We now descend again to the ground floor, and inspect the laundry. Here the girls are hard at work, but as cheerfully as our own little girl might be when she has teased her mother into a consent to allow her to wash her doll's clothes. Washing-day must be washing-day wherever it is, and it is impossible to dispense with a certain amount of discomfort in connection with it, but it is minimised here to the smallest possible extent. The boiling is done by steam pipes, the wringing is done by machinery, the girls are provided with thick woollen overalls and capital strong boots the room is warm and as

comfortable as a wash-house can be made, and there the little maidens stand learning one of the most important domestic duties in a thoroughly efficient manner. We may mention that no washing is "taken in" at the home; it is simply the work of the school which is performed by the inmates.

We pass on into the bread room, where the store of the staff of life is kept, and we saw the bread as it was cut for each girl's tea, three large thick slices of beautiful new bread, of as good and pure quality as ever we wish to eat. These slices were spread with pure beef dripping from the meat which had been cooked for the girls' dinner the day before. No dripping, we were informed, is ever purchased; but when that wholesome article fails butter or treacle is used, so that the diet is constantly changed. We pass on into the store-room, and view the stock of provisions—tea, cocoa, sugar, rice, haricot beans—abundance of everything, and everything of the very best quality. We tasted the cocoa, and being a commodity for which we have a special *penchant*, we have no hesitation in describing it as first-class.

We entered the kitchen, scullery, pantry, lavatories, and in each department the same regularity, order, and cleanliness prevailed; and we only recorded the simple truth when we wrote in the visitors' book that we were delighted with all we had seen.

A brief report by the same writer of the other industrial school, Cambridge Heath, was quite as satisfactory.

GETTING AT THE POOR.

By G. Holden Pike.

On Sunday, February 12th last, we devoted some hours to an inspection of some of the low parts of Camberwell in connection with Nelson Street Ragged School, one of the oldest institutions of the kind to be found in London, having been founded in 1810, and which is now superintended by Mr. John Kirk, secretary of the Ragged School Union. The school is situated in Nelson Street, Wyndham Road. Poor, narrow, densely-populated streets abound in all directions, and as we pass from one to another, seeing enough to suggest the dark thought that none are really getting at the people save the publicans, we with difficulty realise that this broad area was once pleasant market-gardens, or it was studded with the rural mansions for which Camberwell was once famous.

When the agents of a new organisation came into the locality in 1849, the condition of the streets and houses all around was bad

beyond description, so that the wonder was that people could be found, as volunteer teachers, to sacrifice comfort and risk health in such philanthropic enterprise. It is thus, as a neighbourhood, a hopeful contrast to what it was a generation ago; but while the sanitary outlook has improved, the problem of getting at the poor is not completely solved. Though rebuilt so recently as 1870, there was danger of the Nelson Street station being given up after the School Board took charge of the day-school, and this would actually have come to pass had not Mr. Kirk, with a few evangelistic friends, re-formed the committee, to start afresh on the broad Christian basis of the past.

On each Sunday morning throughout the year a free breakfast is prepared for the poor who choose to come; and when the plain repast is finished several suitable addresses are given by different friends interested in the work. On Sunday last 110 were regaled with coffee and bread and butter, and exclusive of the thirty children who were served separately, the guests were as motley a throng as could under the circumstances be drawn together. The greater portion belonged to the class to whom a breakfast is a boon sufficiently great to be worth walking some distance to secure; and accordingly the unkempt natives were seen sitting side by side with the habitants of the Mint lodging-houses. A gentleman, whose vehement style of oratory appeared to be heartily approved, and an educated lady, whose gentler mode of speaking was no less effective, each gave an address well adapted to the requirements of such an audience.

After the service we saw several subjects who professed to have found good at the meetings, and several more turned into the inquiry room. One of the converts was a youth of pleasing intelligence, who said he was accustomed to looking after horses; but two others, who had more suggestively curious stories to tell, came from the Southwark lodging-houses. The institution is a ragged school more than it is anything else, and we were glad to find among the teachers a young man who was educated at the Stockwell Orphanage.

RICHMOND STREET MISSION, WALWORTH.

The annual meeting of the teachers and workers of this Mission was held on Wednesday, February 15th, 1882. Mr. J. T. Dunn, the president, occupied the chair, and was supported by the superintendents (past and present) of the schools, Mr. R. J. Curtis, as representing the Ragged School Union, and several elders of the Metropolitan Tabernacle, with which the Mission is allied, though it does not altogether depend on that church for support.

This annual meeting is an occasion of much interest, for it serves three purposes. First, of bringing all the workers together, and thus giving them a social intercourse which they might otherwise not have. Secondly, of presenting to them statements of the progress of the various departments that are associated with their work, so as to make them cognisant of all that is going on. And thirdly, to infuse into them a spirit of holy emulation and activity in the Master's cause, by which His glory may be manifested in the work, and His kingdom extended by their untiring efforts.

The SUNDAY MORNING SCHOOL is superintended by Mr. Llewellyn, and is attended by about eighty children and eight teachers.

A CHILDREN'S SERVICE is held at the close of the teaching under Mr. Bromell, the secretary. Attendance, 100.

THE AFTERNOON SCHOOL

is divided into three departments of labour. First, the Young Men's Bible Class, under the leadership of Mr. How. Second, the Upper School, for the children and elder boys and girls. And third, the Infants' School. All these are under the superintendence of Mr. Llewellyn, who is nobly supported by a band of forty-five teachers, whose average attendance reaches thirty. These teachers have under their charge no less than 406 children, with an average attendance of 321. In the various sections into which this effort is divided, the blessing of God has been, without an exception, abundantly bestowed, no less than fifteen young men and women having found the Saviour and joined the church during the year, whilst many little ones have given evidences of conversion, and others are seeking Jesus.

THE RAGGED OR SUNDAY EVENING SCHOOL

is superintended by Mr. C. G. Barr. It is remarkable to notice the difference in the class, character, cleanliness, and number of the children who attend. The capacity of the two schools for holding the poor little uncared-for children who flock to the warmth and comfort of a Ragged School is often taxed to the utmost, and at times it is found necessary to give the order to admit no more, as all the classes are more than full, and there is no room for others. Here we have an average of twenty-one teachers, and for the most part quite a different set from those in the afternoon, who nobly and at a great sacrifice to themselves toil amongst the roughest, and scatter seed into the most difficult and unpromising ground. The large number of children, whose average attendance reaches 366, and the small number of teachers, necessarily makes the burden heavier and the work more difficult to those upon whom it falls, but it is a noticeable fact that all the teachers work with a heartiness and cheerfulness that

are most commendable, and not a single heart waxes lukewarm in consequence of the hardness of the yoke. Still the Master is gracious to His servants, and sends them rewards for faithful service, for three have joined the church from this part of the work, and no less than twelve have found joy in believing. One instance may be recorded of a little lad who had been a scholar in one of the boys' classes, and in whom, though not more than twelve years of age, the seeds of deep consumption were ripening unto death. This little fellow, just before he died, gave every evidence to his teacher, who visited him at his bedside, of his faith in his Saviour, and died exhorting his parents to follow him.

Scholars' Prizes.

Seven scholars obtained in the year 1881 prizes for having kept their situations, which were presented by the Ragged School Union.

As the necessary adjuncts to both the Afternoon and Evening Schools there are Libraries and Pure Literature Societies. In the Libraries there are 362 books of a useful and instructive nature, which are read by 170 scholars; 1,969 exchanges were made during the year.

The Pure Literature Society is doing good work in the sale of weekly and monthly periodicals, about 3,000 papers and books of various kinds being thus disposed of, and a consequent profit being handed to the Treasurer of the School.

Flint Street School, under Mr. Goldston, is a branch of the Mission. Some 70 children attend the morning and 150 children the afternoon school, under 15 teachers.

The Mothers' Meetings, conducted by Miss Francis, are held on Monday afternoons. Forty-one meetings have been held, with an average attendance of 70, the largest number present on one occasion being 109.

We must now notice the

Tract Society,

which, under Mr. F. J. Clarke, secretary, is a means of reaching the parents of the scholars. Seven streets, containing 237 houses, are regularly visited by six tract distributors. One of the most interesting features of this Society is the provision of an Annual Christmas Dinner to the most deserving poor in the tract district, who would, but for this effort, be unprovided for on that day. No less than 81 families were relieved in this way last Christmas, and the money to meet the cost of this provision is subscribed by the teachers and friends by penny weekly contributions and by donations.

THE PENNY BANK.

Mr. Martin, the secretary, reports there are at present 869 depositors, who have in one year placed £285 to their credit.

At the MUTUAL IMPROVEMENT SOCIETY, of which Mr. How is secretary, the attendance at the 41 meetings during the year has been exceedingly good, and the manner in which the various essays, lectures, discussions, &c., &c., have been taken up by the members and friends shows that this branch of the Master's service is well worth sustaining.

The CHILDREN'S SERVICE, conducted by Mr. Everett and Mr. Morgan, is held on Tuesday evenings, at 7 o'clock, with an average attendance of 186 children.

There is an ADULT SERVICE, presided over by Mr. Llewellyn, at which a large number of the parents of the scholars attend pretty regularly.

THE YOUNG CHRISTIANS' ASSOCIATION,

under the supervision of Mr. Nightvoles, is, as its name implies, an institution for the training of those who have begun to love the Lord, and its meetings are held on alternate Wednesdays with growing success. Some 59 young people have expressed a desire to join this Association, and on the recommendation of the teacher have been accepted. For the purpose of giving them a greater interest in the meetings, a tea is held once a quarter, to which they are invited free of charge.

Another useful effort for the Master is

THE EVANGELISTS' ASSOCIATION.

During the summer months open-air services are held; in the winter the Gospel is expounded indoors. By this instrumentality three persons have found pardon of their sins by believing in Jesus.

The YOUNG MEN'S PRAYER MEETING is also held on Thursday evenings, conducted by Mr. How, which is well supported, and forms a means of grace to those who require lifting out of strong temptation.

The "BAND OF HOPE" AND THE "TEMPERANCE SOCIETY," under the conduct of Mr. How, are both flourishing.

It should be stated that in all the various works which have been thus summarised, though working quite independently of each other, the finances of each and all are in every way satisfactory, and this satisfaction is increased when it is borne in mind that the funds are raised out of the pockets of the workers, and with no help from the General Committee.

Correspondence.

WORK AMONG THE FACTORY GIRLS.

DEAR MR. CURTIS,—In compliance with your kind request, I have much pleasure in sending you some account of our little work amongst the dear girls who attend our evening classes at Harley Hall. We hold these, as I think you know, twice in the week. On Tuesday for regular lessons, reading, writing, &c., and on Thursday the girls do needlework, while we try to make the hour as pleasant as possible by reading to, and singing with them; and I think we quite succeed, for they seem to enjoy the time thus spent, and I know we do. Then, after the regular routine of the evening is over, we always have half an hour for a simple Bible address, and close with prayer.

The girls who attend these classes are principally from Bryant and May's, or Bell and Black's factories, but we also have some button makers, some from the brush factories, &c.

We do not take in any under fourteen, and most of our number are over sixteen years of age. The schoolroom where we meet is at the back of our chapel in the Devon's Road; it holds about 70 girls, and we have latterly had it quite full.

Last year we went to some expense in having the room done up; a new floor was put, and the roof raised, &c., so that now it really makes a most pleasant and comfortable room. We always have a bright fire burning in the old chimney-place, around which the girls love to congregate after the class is over. Sometimes we find it quite difficult to get them to leave at all!

One corner of the room is supplied with toilet apparatus, and there they can wash their hands before the class begins; this, you may believe, is a very necessary proceeding, for, as our class commences at 7 o'clock, they come straight to us on leaving the factory, without going home first.

We also provide them with a good cup of tea and two slices of bread and butter for the modest sum of one penny.

During the evening our number is divided into six classes, and on Tuesday four ladies very kindly come from the West End to help us. On Thursday, however, we have to fall back upon paid teachers from the neighbourhood.

During the evening we often find a few spare moments for pleasant chat with the girls, and I am sure that no one who has not tried similar work would believe how interesting and nice many

of them are, nor how soon we get to love them dearly. Hidden away under the rough exterior we find *such* warm true hearts, and are often much touched by little words and actions that show how much they appreciate our affection and interest.

And now that I have given you some details about the management of our classes, permit me to add a few words as to the result.

You know, dear Mr. Curtis, far better than I do, the difficulties and dangers to which a factory girl is daily exposed, and the terrible persecution she has to undergo if there be the least suspicion of her "turning religious," as they say. Knowing all this, I feel reluctant to express myself too strongly, but I do believe that I may say with truth that from 25 to 30 of our dear girls have sought and found the Lord, and in Him, peace and pardon.

We have had great joy and blessing in our work amongst them lately. Every Thursday there are anxious ones staying behind to talk about these matters, and on Tuesday we have a prayer-meeting after the class for those who profess to be Christians.

Such a solemn quiet spirit seems to come over them at these times that we cannot think their profession other than true.

Then, too, ever since this movement began amongst them (only about a month ago), the numbers attending the classes have been increasing, and this is, I think, a good sign. Altogether we are much encouraged and full of thankfulness. About 30 of the girls have signed the pledge and joined our blue ribbon army.

Now I must not add more, but will you pray for these dear girls? that they may be *kept*.

With many thanks for your kind interest,

I am yours, most sincerely,

February 21st, 1882. MARY GERALDINE GUINNESS.

FOX COURT.—LETTER OF AN OLD SCHOLAR.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Quarterly Record.

DEAR SIR,—A few years since some account which I sent of an Old Scholar of Fox Court Ragged Schools who enlisted as a common soldier about twelve years since, and shortly after went out to India with his regiment, was published in the *Ragged School Union Magazine*. It described his studious habits and rapid acquirement of knowledge during a career of some years at those schools, and his quick promotion in his regiment (the last grade he held there was that of barrack-sergeant), also his perseverance in studying the French and Hindustani languages, in which he is now proficient, and to which he has added the study of Persian with probably the same thoroughness.

Having become an excellent arithmetician and linguist, it is not at all surprising that he was removed from the military into the civil service of the Indian Government, at a salary approaching £300 per annum, with the prospect of its increase, which, I think, will shortly occur. He married a few years since a young Englishwoman settled in India, and is now about thirty years of age. For a considerable time he has been paying, through monthly remittances made to me, 10s. per week to his old and infirm father, who must otherwise be the inmate of a workhouse. His career as a Christian since he entered the regiment has been also a marked one.

The foregoing remarks will serve to give due interest to the following copy letter, the last of the many I have received from him, which I send for publication if you think fit.

I suppress the name and address of the writer of this letter, as it would be wrong in me to publish them without his permission. The charitable undertaking and gifts he alludes to are those of the friends of the school usual at Christmas.

I remain, dear Sir,

Yours truly,

———— WILLIAM ELLIS.

(Copy.) "December 7th, 1881.

"My dear Sir,—My letter will, I am afraid, reach you after Christmas and all its happy amusements are over, but not too late, I hope, to wish you a Happy New Year, and that you may be spared to see other Merry Christmases and Happy New Years.

"I only wish I was at home just for a day to see you, and wish you everything good in person, and I think you would be glad to see your old scholar too.

"Christmas is comparatively a very dull affair with us out in India. I am afraid we see so many native festivities that we lose the power of keeping up Christmas as it should be kept up. Only the other day there was a grand native annual festival, an account of which you will read in this week's *Overland Mail*—the Mohunam, a Mahomedan festival or fast in commemoration of the two grandsons of Mahomed. However, we have lots of festivities on the board for Christmas, and I have no doubt my little ones will enjoy themselves. You must have been quite busy in your charitable undertakings during the last week, as I know how you used to keep us all so happy with your gifts. I wish I could afford to send you home a few pounds every Christmas to spend on the Fox Court scholars. Whenever I am able to spare the money I will certainly do so.

"At present I am only able to send a small amount to father for

the New Year, but perhaps next Christmas, if God spares me, I may be able to send something for the old school.

"I enclose a remittance of £2 10s., being 5s. 2d. extra to assist in providing my father with something extra for the New Year in the shape of clothing. I trust he is still continuing in fair health, and I hope he is not finding the winter very severe. Please give him my love and best wishes for the New Year, and ask him to give my love to my brother and sisters also.

"I have not replied separately to his last kind letter which you were good enough to enclose with yours, but I received it, and was much pleased indeed with it, particularly to hear that he was realising the blessedness of the true faith, and taking a real delight in attending dear Mr. Williams's little gatherings.

"I really don't know how to express my gratitude to you for your charitable care of my father. It is really very good of you to help him so much, and I feel very, very thankful.

"Please give my kindest regards to Mr. Williams, and ask him to convey them to his dear family, and accept the same yourself from Mrs. ——— and your old scholar, "———."

LETTER OF SYMPATHY TO THE QUEEN RESPECTING THE RECENT INFAMOUS ATTEMPT ON HER LIFE, FROM "THE ONE TUN."

The One Tun Ragged School,
Old Pye Street, Westminster, S.W.
March 10, 1882.

Kind Lady Queen,—We are only poor little girls and boys, but we wish to tell you how sorry we and our fathers and mothers and everybody are that any one should try to hurt you; but they can't do it, because God will take care of you.

We hope you will have a good time and enjoy your excursion, as we always do, and come home soon quite well.

From your humble, loyal school children,
Signed for all the girls by— Hannah Howe (aged 10).
Signed for all the boys— George Coleman (aged 10).

Her Majesty's Gracious Reply.

"Lieut.-General Sir Henry F. Ponsonby is commanded by the Queen to thank Mrs. J. B. Harrison for the letter of congratulation.

"Buckingham Palace, 15th March, 1882."

OGLE MEWS RAGGED SCHOOLS.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Quarterly Record.

Dear Sir,—Being well acquainted with the difficulties, disappointments, and trials connected with the Ragged School enterprise, permit me to offer a word of encouragement to fellow-labourers.

In following the Divine commission of bringing in the poor from the streets and lanes of the city, there is involved much valuable discipline, abundant opportunities for Christian usefulness, and in thus following the self-denying example of Him "who went about doing good," much blessing to those who are privileged to share in such a work.

Every true-hearted Christian so engaged is of course content to labour on in simple dependence on the Lord, resting on His sure word of promise, seeking in humble confidence that blessing without which all effort is nothing worth, and content to wait for results till "the day shall declare it."

Nevertheless it is a most blessed encouragement when we are permitted to see the "precious seed," so often sown in tears, bringing forth fruit.

The following spontaneous testimony addressed from a former scholar to my dear wife will doubtless be to others what it is to my humble self, another proof that our labour is not in vain.

Yours faithfully,

F. Blennerhassett,

Hon. Superintendent.

(Copy.)

"My Dear Mrs. Blennerhassett,—You will, I have no doubt, wonder why I am writing to you, but I feel I must write and tell you as a little encouragement in your work and labour of love for Jesus, how happy I am in Him.

"I never come to the school but what my heart is lifted up and blessed by our loving Lord Jesus. How I remember the happy days I spent there, how full of blessing they were! It was there that I learnt to love Jesus, and give my heart, my sinful, wayward heart, to Him; and I have realised since then, now seven years ago, His mighty power to save, not only from the burden and penalty, but also from the power of sin. And now I am so happy I cannot forget my old school, and my dear kind friends there.

"And may I tell you the Lord has given me a little work to do for Him, even to lead other little ones to Him? Oh! I do pray that you may see many of the dear children in the school brought to Jesus to trust Him as their Saviour.

"I wanted to speak to you at the meeting, but could not get the opportunity. My heart was so full. And oh, may the Lord bless and keep you according to His promise, which can never fail.

"With love from yours most affectionately in Jesus, "K. S."

And now by way of postscript allow me to add a few words on the school treats of Ogle Mews; for as the winter is over and gone, and the time of the singing of birds has come, we are brought to the consideration of the Summer Treat. The above school is highly privileged in this matter, as the sequel will show; it is mentioned in order that such an example may provoke imitation. These treats are not thrown open, but certain conditions are imposed, which have answered admirably for twelve years. The conditions, though somewhat stringent, are readily complied with in consequence of the prevailing impression that these entertainments are worth striving for.

Thus these special encouragements act as valuable incentives to perseverance in well-doing, are useful in maintaining the general order and discipline of the schools, and are therefore worthy of sympathy and support.

On the occasion of the last Summer Treat three hundred children and a large party of teachers were most generously entertained by their kind president, Sir R. W. Carden, M.P., at his seat, West Moulsey.

Numerous presents were kindly distributed by Miss Carden and Mrs. Adams, and a new sixpenny piece to each child by their benefactor and host.

As an evidence of the lasting influence of such sympathy, a former scholar, who was waiting the return of his daughter (one of the party), was heard to say he had visited West Moulsey when a boy in the school, and still possessed and treasured very highly the new sixpence presented to him on that occasion.

The Christmas Treats consisted of a dinner to the elder girls and boys, who received a large number of prizes from Sir R. W. Carden, who presided on the occasion.

Suitable entertainment was also provided for the younger children, including the traditional Christmas tree.

For generous sympathy with these arrangements the committee and teachers record their gratitude to R. Hepburn, Esq., and family; also to J. L. Bennet, Esq., T. Galpin, Esq., and other friends. The mothers had their gala night. A most admirable musical entertainment (preceded by a tea) was given to them by a party of friends, principally members of the Presbyterian Church, Regent's Square.

FAREWELL TESTIMONIAL.

HATFIELD STREET RAGGED SCHOOL AND MISSION, GOLDEN LANE, E.C.

A GATHERING of friends interested in the welfare of this work was recently held. After a social tea, a public meeting, at which a good number were present, was presided over by the treasurer, J. Beament, Esq., when the ex-hon. secretary, Mr. J. Comley Page, was presented with a testimonial, consisting of a silver tea and coffee service, subscribed for by the friends and children of the Mission, as an acknowledgment of faithful service rendered during the last six years, and who had now resigned through removal to a distance.

Addresses were given by the workers, who bore testimony to the untiring zeal and self-sacrifice that their late secretary had displayed, sparing no pains to help to free the institution from debt and maintain its manifold agencies in a vigorous condition, and therein much success had been the result.

At the close of the meeting those present had an opportunity of inspecting the testimonial.

The committee wish to state that Mr. J. C. Page has been succeeded by Mr. G. A. Robottom, who will be pleased to give a detailed account of the work to those who are interested in Missions and Ragged Schools.

Notices of Books.

Canal Adventures by Moonlight. By George Smith, of Coalville. (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 27, Paternoster Row.)

THE uneducated boat-children in 1877 were set down at 60,000. This book, which tells a painful story of neglect, should commend itself to all those who feel an interest in a neglected and migratory population. Through the exertions of this humble philanthropist an act was passed in 1877 for the registration of canal boats, to prevent overcrowding, and for securing the education of the children of those who ply on our inland waters. Owing to some defects in its provisions, or in the working of the Act, it has been comparatively a dead letter. To remedy this state of things the Canal Boats' Amendment Act was introduced in 1881 by Mr. Broadhurst, and received favourable recognition by eminent men of both parties—the Government included. The Irish Land Bill and the miserable waste of time by the obstructionist party led to its withdrawal. The progress of the Bill, however, was specially blocked by Sir Edward Watkin and Mr.

Bolton. Sir Edward Watkin, if report says true, expressed himself as unfavourable to the education of these water-waifs. The new Bill will, it is hoped, contain a provision that no child under thirteen years shall be allowed to work without having passed the third standard, or to work on Sundays. Some of the poor boat children occasionally walk as many as thirty miles a day; very many of them crawl or limp from sixteen to eighteen miles. Children connected with brickyards, agriculture, and factories are under protection, why not these?

The book details the frequent journeys of Mr. Smith on his errands of mercy, ofttimes suffering great privations, setting out in true apostolic fashion, with neither purse nor scrip, in all weathers, exposed at times to great insult, and sometimes to bodily peril. His sympathies and labours have been extended to gipsy children also. When the amended Act becomes law it would be a gracious act on the part of the Government to make him chief inspector.

Bible Light for Truth-seekers. (London: Haughton and Co., 10, Paternoster Row, E.C.)

If the first volume of this serial may be regarded as a sample of what is to follow, it is entitled to hearty approval, and to young Christians especially whose faith and knowledge are frequently immature we would strongly recommend it. In these days of hurry and worry the short papers in this book are most suitable for composing the mind and inducing quiet meditation. Airs from heaven refresh the languid soul.

It has an inquirers' page, hard texts are explained, and the Children's Scriptural Union is catered for. A portion of Scripture is given for each day, with the request to the members to pray for one another every Sunday morning.

Consumption: its Nature, Causes, and Successful Treatment. (Elliot Stock, Paternoster Row.)

This treatise inspires hope. Desperate cases have been cured. Reliable letters of recent date bear witness to the efficacy of Mr. George Congreve's mode of treatment.

Notices of Meetings.

YOUTHS' INSTITUTE, OLD PYE STREET, WESTMINSTER.

A short time since the eighth anniversary of this Institute was celebrated. It is one of the many efforts made by Mrs. Barker-Harrison to benefit the poor of Westminster, and offers to working lads the advantages of educational classes, a drum-and-fife band, swimming, athletic sports, chess, draughts, a penny bank, library, &c., at the small charge of 4d. a month. The rooms of the Institute are open every evening from half-past six till a quarter to ten, with warm rooms and a variety of attractions to suit all tastes. Sir Robert Carden presided.

The report of the year's proceedings was read by Mr. Payne, and referred, in opening, to the fact that it was the twenty-first time Sir Robert Carden had presided over a similar gathering, he having taken the chair at the first anniversary of the Westminster Working Men's Club, in 1860, which, after being carried on for thirteen years, was transferred into an Institute for Working Lads from the age of thirteen to eighteen. The report went on to refer to the competitions which took place, and extended over a period of six weeks, creating much interest among the lads. The Bible Classes were attended by fifty-four members. The subject of the Bible examination was, "The birds of the Bible, with illustrations," and the first prize was gained by George Knott, who had written out 300 verses, and drawn forty different birds. No. 144 of the puzzle-sheet, containing original charades, enigmas, &c., under the editorship of Mr. Geary, was just issued, and contained an original acrostic by James Sweeney, on the name of their chairman. The Chess Club was very efficient, and the members were anxious to compete with visitors. The Swimming Club was progressing well, the members competing for prizes which were kindly given by Sir Robert Carden and Mr. Waldo-Sibthorp. Mrs. Barker-Harrison's third silver medal for the champion swimmer had been won this year, for the first time, by F. Birch. The report stated that during last year 3,690 persons were drowned in inland waters in Great Britain, 976 of whom were under sixteen years of age. The Penny Bank was also well patronised. Since the opening of the Institution in 1873, 534 lads had become members; forty-nine had become volunteers, and fourteen were now married.

The chairman distributed the prizes, which consisted of books and money, and were very numerous.

The thanks of the members, and also of Mrs. Barker-Harrison, were tendered to Mr. Geary, the manager of the Institute and conductor of the educational classes.

Mr. Payne presented Sir Robert Carden with a framed copy of a text, executed by J. Jaggs, one of the lads; also a copy of the acrostic

on his name, and a like compliment was also paid to Mr. and Mrs. A. J. Woodhouse.

Sir Robert Carden expressed his pleasure at being present. This was one of the very happy evenings which he had taken part in with much pleasure for the last twenty-one years.

The Rev. H. S. Paterson said that with that anniversary the chairman attained his majority as president of these meetings, and he was pleased that Sir Robert had for so many years honoured and graced the anniversary by his presence.

Sir Robert Carden left his customary two guineas towards the Swimming Club.

KINGSLAND.

The thirty-third anniversary of the Kingsland Ragged School was held in the Congregational Chapel, under the presidency of the pastor, Dr. Aveling, some short time since. Mr. Day read the report, detailing the various agencies for good which had been sustained, numbering fifteen in all, and including Sunday Afternoon and Evening Schools, Gospel Services Sunday and week evening, House-to-House Visitation, Tract Distribution, Band of Hope, Treats and Amusements, Penny Bank, Mothers' Meeting and Dorcas Society, Lending Library, &c., &c. There was a deficiency due to the treasurer of £16, and a lament at the paucity of teachers. Addresses were delivered by the Rev. W. Ellis, Mr. J. Kirk, of the Ragged School Union, Mr. Hoon, Mr. Macdonald, and others, including an earnest appeal from the chairman for more money and more teachers in support of the good and necessary work to be done in the Ragged School.

KING EDWARD STREET RAGGED SCHOOL.

The Earl of Shaftesbury presided at the thirty-fourth anniversary of the above school. From the report read by Mr. Montague it appeared there were in connection with the school 734 children, with a staff of 41 voluntary teachers, and with an average attendance on the Sunday evening of 435. On week nights there was a school for boys and girls and also industrial classes. Then there was a Penny Bank, in which as many as 247 accounts had been opened during the year, a Parents' Library, and a Mission Service for those who did not go to church or chapel. There had been 231 readers in the Scholars' Library, and a large number of publications, including Bibles, had been sold at reduced rates or given away. Forty-eight boys and girls who had been at service during the year had behaved so well that they were to receive prizes. There had been a flower service, to which many of the ladies of rank at the West End had made valuable contributions, and the children, besides raising money for the hospitals of the district, had sent Mrs. Garfield a message of sympathy. The Band of Hope and Drum and Fife Band had been successful. The total receipts of the year had been £522, leaving a balance due to the treasurer, as the place had been recently repaired and painted. The speakers were: Rev. R. Billing, Rev. J. Saunders, Dr. McAuslane. Lord Shaftesbury, in distributing the prizes, said a few encouraging

words, which were followed up by Sir Robert Carden.

DOVE ROW, HAGGERSTON.

The annual treats were held in January; the first at the Morley Hall, Hackney, when 333 scholars sat down to tea. An entertainment was given by the Royal Holdfast Temperance Handbell Ringers, to which the parents and friends were admitted. During the interval of the entertainment a new hymn-book, worth 6d., was given to each scholar, and on leaving each scholar received an orange. Many of the parents expressed surprise at the good conduct of the scholars, and were much delighted with the entertainment.

The infants' treat was held in Dove Row School; 172 took tea together. The "Marionettes" greatly amused them; not one went to sleep. Afterwards each child received two toys and an orange.

LATYMER ROAD, NOTTING HILL, BOXING NIGHT COCOA CONCERT.

The committee, knowing well by past experience the terrible amount of drinking that prevails on Bank Holidays, and especially on Boxing Day, determined to do what lay in their power to lessen the evil. Accordingly, it was duly announced that on Boxing Night there would be provided at the Mission Rooms six hours' amusement (including refreshments) for the modest sum of one penny. The doors were opened at six o'clock, but long before that time many had taken up their places outside the doors so as to secure good seats. Before half an hour had elapsed the room was crowded. The audience warmly applauded the artistes, and in many instances were loud in their demands for an encore. Amongst those who kindly rendered their services were Miss Coggan, Miss Gladstone, Miss Macaulay, the Misses Vaux, Major Hall, Mr. Harrison, Mr. Cousins, and "the coal-heavers." There is little doubt but that some preventive work was done on that evening, for many were present who otherwise most certainly would have been wasting their time and brains away in some of the—alas! too many—public-houses hard by. One old lady who had been most enthusiastic during the concert, and who had remained the whole time, was heard to say, "Oh, sir, it was lovely; I could have remained until three o'clock in the morning."

We could not help thinking as we wended our way homewards, what a vast amount of good would be done, and hard drinking prevented, if these sort of entertainments were more common.

FIELD LANE REFUGES.

The usual Christmas dinner was given at this Institution to the "homeless" on Monday, 26th December, 1881. Over 800 of the most miserable and woe-begone men and women of this great city partook of the good things set before them, and there might be seen representatives of all classes — the tramp, the labourer, the mechanic out of work, the broken-down gentleman, meeting on one common platform — poverty. By eleven o'clock the bustle began, and friends of the Institution, ready and willing to help in any way, either as carvers, waiters, or speakers, rapidly arrived. Short addresses were delivered, and

kindly words of welcome were given, and at twelve o'clock, after grace had been sung, the repast commenced. The viands, consisting of hot roast-beef and plum-pudding, were soon dispatched, no less than 672 lb. of beef, 750 lb. of pudding, eight sacks of potatoes, 100 quartern loaves, and 804 oranges being consumed. The guests left about 1.30 o'clock, having evidently thoroughly enjoyed their dinner. In addition to those mentioned above, 503 poor families in the neighbourhood had been supplied with a like entertainment. The entire cost was defrayed by donations specially given for the purpose. The following ladies and gentlemen amongst others took an active part:—Rev. Mr. and Miss Woods, Rev. G. T. Andrews, Colonel Griffin, Dr. Franklin, Mr. and Mrs. Payne, Mr. and Mrs. Chadwick, Mr. and Mrs. Moore, Mr. Nimmo, Mr. Faulding, Mr. and Miss Viney, Mr. Hugh Reid Griffin, Mr. Gough, and Mr. Edmunds, of Gray's Yard.

FIELD LANE RAGGED SCHOOLS.

The following brief particulars of what is believed to be a unique branch of Ragged School work lately established in connection with the above schools may interest many of our readers.

It is termed a "Mutual Improvement Class," and differs from a Mutual Improvement *Society* in being attended by *children*, aged from twelve years upwards.

Commenced in November last with only ten members, it has now more than thirty-five, and their number is steadily increasing. It need hardly be said that the object of the class is not to amuse, but to interest and morally improve the children. That this is appreciated is shown by the attention and regular attendance, no less than by several members who had lost their tickets of admission having cared to purchase new ones. Both girls and boys are admitted, but sit separately, two monitors being appointed to preserve order. The meetings, which last one hour and a half, and are held weekly, open and close with prayer and singing, in which instruction is given. The members recite poetry or read prose, though not at every meeting. Addresses are given, as also short biographies, descriptions of countries, men, animals, &c. To which may be added lecturettes or notes on historical and scientific subjects, illustrated by experiments, diagrams, &c.; and finally any such other matter as is likely to prove instructive and interesting. Each member is furnished with a copy of the rules of the class, which may be obtained, together with any further particulars desired, from the Secretary, Field Lane Ragged Schools, Vine Street, Clerkenwell Road, E.C.

We may also remind our readers that contributions, or disused children's books for the Library, will be very welcome.

THE TWELFTH ANNIVERSARY OF GRAY'S YARD RAGGED CHURCH.

On Sunday, Jan. 8th, the annual breakfast, held in connection with the Ragged Church, Gray's Yard, was held under distinguished auspices, the chairman this year being Sir Thomas Chambers, M.P. Mr. J. Edmunds, the honorary secretary, at the outset stated that well-known friends, as Mr. F. Bevan,

Mr. G. Hanbury, and Lord Leigh were unavoidably absent; but as regards the poor to be fed, the attendance was greater than ever. Nor is this much to be wondered at when, as Mr. Woods observed, in addition to the breakfast, there was to be an afternoon meal for the men, so ready to come and so loth to depart. It is rather a costly hospitality, but the funds to defray it are collected from all parts of England. It does one good, not so much to witness so appalling a mass of pauperism, as to realise how active is the Christian charity which cares for such, and which once again provides them with a pleasant morning and a substantial meal. Gray's Yard Ragged School is one of the oldest, if not *the* oldest, in London. As a Ragged Church, on Sunday it completed its twelfth anniversary, and it is to the credit of Sir Thomas Chambers that he was present on the first occasion of its being opened. The work is entirely unsectarian. The expense of the New Year's breakfast is defrayed by a special fund. Each individual had a one-pound meat pie, coffee *ad libitum*, three slices of bread-and-butter, and a large piece of cake. At the close, Mr. John Morley's usual gifts of portions of the Gospel were distributed. Other speakers followed: Mr. Denham Smith, Dr. Heywood Smith, Mr. Buckingham, of the Ragged School Union, Dr. Gilbert Smith, and Sir Thomas Chambers, who commented briefly on "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven and whose sin is covered." It only remains to say that there was some beautiful solo singing by Miss Mary Davis between the speeches, as well as general singing.

LANSDOWNE PLACE SCHOOL.

The annual meeting of this Institution was held on Saturday, 17th December, 1881, in the Pastor's College, Metropolitan Tabernacle, at which there was a good attendance of teachers, presided over by Mr. John Wilson, who was for many years the popular superintendent of the school.

The report stated that the expenditure for the year was £74 10s. 4d., leaving a balance due to the treasurer of £3 2s. 6d.

The average attendance of children for the year was on Sunday afternoons 129, and on Sunday evenings 223.

The school is open on Monday evenings for the transaction of Penny Bank business, in connection with which there are 118 depositors, whose deposits for the year amounted to £24 0s. 7d.

On this evening the ladies connected with the school conduct a Sewing Class for girls. During the year 192 articles were made and given away. Another part of the schoolroom is set apart as a Reading Room and Library, where drawing-slates, draughts, &c., are provided.

It has been ascertained that some have found this to be the only means within their reach of obtaining good literature. If any of our readers have volumes or periodicals suitable for adults or children which they can spare, any small parcel addressed to the Superintendent of Lansdowne Place Schools, Tabard Street, Boro', S.E., will be thankfully received and gratefully acknowledged.

A Band of Hope meeting is conducted on Tuesday evenings at half-past seven, and a meeting for mothers on Wednesday evenings at eight.

A meeting for the children is held every Friday at eight of an instructive and entertaining nature.

All these works are in a healthy and prosperous condition, and if any of our readers are disposed to help, the address of the treasurer is, Joseph Passmore, Esq., jun., Messrs. Passmore and Alabaster, 4, Paternoster Buildings, E.C.

VINCENT STREET SCHOOLS AND MISSION.

The annual tea-meeting of the scholars attending these schools took place on 19th January last, when the school was crowded in every part. Mr. J. Kirk occupied the chair, supported by Mr. R. J. Curtis, whose presence was hailed with delight by both scholars and teachers. After the tea a large Christmas-tree, which had been kindly lent to the committee by Mr. W. J. Orsman, and which stood on the platform at the end of the room, brilliantly lit up with coloured candles, and glittering with gifts both of a temporary and lasting character, was displayed to the children, and amidst great excitement Mr. Kirk proceeded to distribute the gifts to the happy recipients as their names were called out. They comprised in many instances articles of clothing, and were all the more acceptable. The distribution over, Mr. Mucklow, the treasurer, rose to propose three hearty good cheers for Mr. Curtis, through whose instrumentality they had such pleasure afforded them. His sentiments were very speedily endorsed by the giving of the said cheers with such gusto as only those whose ears have passed through such an ordeal can well imagine. Mr. Curtis rose to reply to the ovation he had received, and remarked that he had been only in a small way connected with the presentation, and that Mr. W. J. Orsman was the gentleman to whom they were so much indebted. This remark elicited a second edition of the applause as hearty as before.

THREE COLT STREET, LIMEHOUSE, RAGGED SCHOOLS.

On the 13th February the quarterly meeting of teachers and friends took place in the schoolroom. The progress of the school was referred to, and found to be satisfactory. An encouraging address was given by Mr. J. Green, comparing the Ragged School work to the parable of the lost piece of silver; he said that there was many a bright piece of silver to be found if we knew where to look, and though we may be the broom, candle, or candlestick, we could not find these precious jewels without the light of heaven.

On the 28th February the children of the same school, over 200, met together to enjoy a tea, after which the superintendent, Mr. Piper, said that though they had suffered the loss of their great and valued friend Mrs. Charlesworth, a new friend was among them, being the Rev. W. Donne, Rector of Limehouse. The Rev. W. Donne then said that he hoped they would have many enjoyable evenings together. Dissolving views then occupied the latter part of the evening, with an address by Mr. Davey.

STEPHEN THE YEOMAN RAGGED SCHOOLS.

The ninth annual gathering of old scholars was held in the school-

room, Marigold Place, Marigold Street, on the evening of Wednesday, the 22nd February. There was a large attendance both of men and women. After tea the chair was taken by Donald Matheson, Esq., President of the Mission, who opened the proceedings by a brief speech, full of kindly counsel and earnest appeal. Subsequent addresses, all short, bright, and to the point, were delivered by the Rev. J. Farren, Messrs. Lewis, Sindall, Vezey, and J. Menzies, the superintendent. The interest was varied and heightened by recitations from Messrs. Pumfrey and T. Menzies, and a pianoforte selection, admirably played by Mr. J. Challis. Throughout the meeting was hearty and pleasant. The old scholars, many of whom had come from considerable distances, seemed to enjoy themselves thoroughly, and there was a warm and friendly feeling everywhere apparent. It was most gratifying to note the affectionate regard which the old scholars evinced to those who once were their teachers, and to the school where in other years they heard the Gospel of the kingdom.

EAST END FACTORY GIRLS.

About 1,500 of this very numerous class of the East End community were gathered into the Edinburgh Castle on Friday evening, 27th January, by invitation of Dr. and Mrs. Barnardo. With the help of various friends the large and lively company were served with a substantial tea.

The chief speaker was the Bishop of Bedford. He was genial and hearty. The girls listened with interest to his address. The missionary attached to the Edinburgh Castle also spoke. After listening to him, the Bishop remarked to Dr. Barnardo, "That is the kind of man we want more of, to get hold of the working classes."

The Bishop of Bedford delivered prizes, consisting of Bibles, workboxes, writing-desks, and books, to young women whose diligent attendance and excellent behaviour during the year entitled them to such distinctions.

WEST GREENWICH.

The parents of the children belonging to this school, and who have been attending the Gospel Meetings, held on alternate Monday evenings, were invited by card to tea on Wednesday, March 1st. About 110 accepted the invitation. During tea some kind ladies played the piano.

At the after meeting Mr. Ker presided. Excellent addresses were delivered by the Rev. F. S. Clarke, Messrs. G. Kirkham, C. McClure, and H. C. Pierson.

YOUNG MEN'S MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION.—MESSRS. I. AND R. MORLEY'S, 18, WOOD STREET.

The anniversary of this institution was held on the ground floor of the warehouse. The chair was occupied by Samuel Morley, Esq., supported by his sons, Messrs. Charles and Howard Morley, and other gentlemen. The report presented gave particulars of the work, embracing Day Schools, Sunday Schools, Mothers' Meeting, Penny Bank, Band of Hope, Adult Mission, with house-to-house visitation, and temporal relief to the most necessitous. Such a work, carried on and paid

for chiefly by the young men belonging to the firm, is most exemplary. The speakers were J. Bumpus, Esq., Q.C., Revs. F. Sanderson and Boyd Carpenter.

OUR ROOM, PARK CRESCENT, CLAPHAM.

Mrs. Stephenson, the lady who for some time superintended the Mothers' Meeting, being obliged to retire, marked the occasion by giving a friendly and farewell tea. Mr. and Mrs. Plummer and the Misses Plummer did their best by playing and singing some appropriate airs to make the evening one of great enjoyment. Mr. Bumstead presided, and Mr. R. J. Curtis, of the Ragged School Union, said a few fitting words.

BEXLEY RAGGED SCHOOL.

It is seldom that out-of-doors children have the delight of witnessing the whole of Punch and Judy. Such a treat was provided by Mr. Charles Lacey for the children of this school. Mr. T. Briant, from Brixton, an amateur, gave a most successful performance.

ST. JAMES'S PLACE, NOTTING HILL, RAGGED SCHOOL AND MOTHERS' SOCIETY.

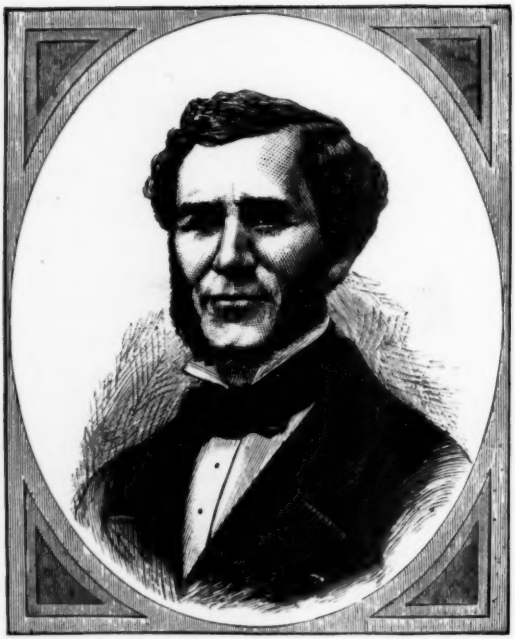
Christmas is a time when old and young look forward to gatherings of one kind or other. True to this custom, on Wednesday, January 11, the annual Mothers' Treat was held in the Ragged Schools, St. James's Place, Notting Hill. The business of the evening began at 6 p.m. with a bountiful tea, to which seventy people sat down, fifty being mothers attending the meeting, and twenty men. On no previous occasion have so many husbands been present, and it was very satisfactory to find how evidently they appreciated their invitation to the tea.

Several visitors remarked the greatly improved appearance of the women; indeed the behaviour was all that could be desired, and the ladies who conduct the weekly meetings receive the greatest attention and consideration from those to whom they so gladly devote their time. Tea over, the second and intellectual part of the evening's amusement began. The Rev. Dr. Thornton, Vicar of St. John's, who frequently gives an address at the weekly meetings, kindly presided. He began the proceedings with prayer, reminding all present that whatsoever we do may be done to the glory of God. The programme which followed consisted of carols, songs, music, and readings, which greatly delighted the audience. The carols were excellently rendered by a large band of ladies and gentlemen. Those carols best known had been selected—"The First Nowell," "The Christmas Hymn," "The Cradle Song," "Good King Wenceslas," and others. Several rehearsals had previously been held, and great kindness and interest shown by those who took the most active part in arranging the musical portion of the programme. The readings were listened to with great attention. The Rev. Dr. Thornton read "The Story of the Plague at Eyam in 1665," and Mr. Buckingham read with great effect a touching tale called "Frozen to Death, or the Cottage on the Hill." In the interval between the parts a pleasant

surprise was in store for the mothers, when a neat packet of clothing given by some friends of Mrs. Nelson and Miss Robinson (the ladies who now carry on the work of this society) was presented to most of the mothers by Mrs. Renton, who twenty years ago was working in connection with this meeting. Judging from the respectable appearance and happy faces of the mothers, one cannot help thinking that the hours spent at the weekly meeting are not wasted. The seed sown in former years is bringing forth fruit, for we feel how greatly this improvement is owing to the late Mrs. C. H. Robinson for her twenty-five years' labour of love amongst these women. It can truly be said that she, though parted from us for awhile, is yet present with us in this her good and loved work. The large number of about eighty visitors testified to the interest taken in this society.

On Friday, January 13, a different scene took place, not quite so orderly, for about 220 boys and girls had their treat. Piles of good cake and bread-and-butter soon disappeared, and when the children seemed to have had sufficient the second part of the programme began with prize-giving. There were prizes for the Sunday Afternoon School, Sunday Evening School, Week-day Night School, Brigade, and last, not least, the Ragged School Union prizes to those who had kept their situations for a twelvemonth. All these were given with a few appropriate words by the chairman, Mr. J. H. Buckingham. The number of prizes and the delight of the winners made one wish to be a child again and have a try for a prize. The Brigade boys, through the kindness of Colonel Hall, came in for some more prizes in the shape of knives.

Whilst the magic-lantern was being got ready the Brigade sang some Christmas carols. The magic-lantern slides illustrated the working of our coal mines, and were explained in a most interesting manner by Mr. Lobley, F.G.S. and F.R.G.S., who made the elder boys and girls understand what coal is and how it is obtained. Then came a tale, "A Trap to Catch a Sunbeam," the slides being very good. This was explained by the Rev. T. G. Crosse, and the entertainment concluded with what delighted the children of all sizes, some comic slides. Through the endeavours of Dr. Withecombe and other gentlemen much is done to help the lads who attend this school to lead noble lives; and knowing that the seed is good, and that the friends who work do it for God's sake, we safely leave the results in His hands. The schoolroom was tastefully decorated with banners, evergreens, and devices for these gatherings. The infants were not forgotten, and on the 26th January about forty (girls and boys) had an afternoon treat—buns, milk, oranges, a gift of clothing and a game of play, the lady superintendent of the Sunday Afternoon School exerting herself for these little ones, as she does for all those under her care.



WILLIAM LOCKE.

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